

aggravated; the evacuations from the bowels were more offensive, frequent, and bloody, attended with nausea and vomiting. In addition to the other medicines, I directed the persesquinitrate of iron and laudanum, continued the stimulation to the abdomen, and gave aromatics to arrest the vomiting. It was all in vain, she succumbed and died on the morning of the 13th.

*Post mortem examination twelve hours after death.*—The external appearance of the body was natural. In the stomach there was a small quantity of a mucous light green fluid; nothing unusual in the duodenum or jejunum. Three or four of the mesenteric glands were very much enlarged, one or two of them as large as chestnuts, or of small peach-stones. In the ileum traces of inflammation commenced, which increased very much in the course of the colon and cæcum. In the appendix cæci we found a common brass pin, which had entered it point foremost, and had already begun to corrode. I could not ascertain how long it lay there. The farther we proceeded in the dissection, the more inflammation we discovered. In the rectum it had gone on almost to suppuration. The other viscera of the abdomen were natural. This examination satisfied us of the propriety of the course we adopted in relation to the administration of astringents, independent of the success which attended the use of them in our practice. To give drastic cathartics in cases of such high inflammation of the bowels, is, in my opinion, but adding fuel to the fire.

DEERFIELD, Mass., Nov. 1841.

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ART. XI.—*Catalepsy induced by Animal Magnetism*. By BLANCHARD FOSGATE, M. D., of Auburn, New York.

THE subject of the following case was a female, sixteen years of age, sanguineo-nervous temperament, in good health, who had passed the change of puberty without derangement of constitution, and is competent to perform the amount of labour that falls to the lot of persons in a humble station in society.

Lest the imputation of sustaining the many wild vagaries of animal magnetism should be attributed to this article, it will be necessary to remark, that such is not its object. The permanent existence of this subject of research, must stand or fall on its own merits; but the admission of individual facts, established by concurrence of a plurality of the senses, and which are necessary to elucidate important phenomena, is the province of true philosophy.

Its influence in this instance was to produce the *diagnostic* symptoms of *complete* catalepsy. The patient, after having submitted to the manipulations of the magnetizer for the space of fifteen minutes, was in a state of sleep so

deep, that all the stimuli that could with safety be applied to the senses, did not disturb the profundity of her slumbers. The needle was applied to the dermoid texture, torpedoes were repeatedly discharged within a few feet of the organs of audition—lights were presented to the apparatus of vision—the vapour of ammonia inhaled with respiration, and general concussion applied to her whole system, without eliciting any acknowledgement. During this condition, her extremities could be placed in any position, which their wax-like flexibility would maintain; and an erect posture was secure without extraneous support, when the feet were so placed as to bring the centre of gravity within the base of sustentation. The respiration resembled that of ordinary sleep, and the arterial action was a little excited. The eyelids, when separated exhibited the globes oculi under the control of the inferior oblique muscle, and upon removing the fingers, the lids would immediately close. The lower jaw retained the position in which it was placed by force.

These unequivocal cataleptic symptoms were succeeded by a development of the integrity of the mental organs, while separated from surrounding objects by the obliteration (for the time being) of the external senses. During this state, questions were submitted to her by the manipulist, and were replied to, some correctly, but the greater portion otherwise, although all the answers had reference to the subject of inquiry, showing conclusively, that several of the fundamental elements of the mind were not influenced by the disease.

During one experiment, it was observed, after the patient had been under this influence for an hour, that the wax-like flexibility of her arms was subsiding. Thom relates an instance of the removal of a paroxysm of catalepsy through the influence of music. An experiment was now resorted to by means of a large accordion played at the back of her head, but without apparent effect. After she was liberated from this condition, she at first retained no recollection of any circumstance whatever; but on having her mind called to the subject of music, she remembered to have heard it, seemingly at a great distance. How this sound was communicated to the sensorium is an enigma, unless the peculiar condition in which she was, had very much subsided, or that there is an influence in the "concord of sweet sounds" over this disease.

These experiments were instituted for the purpose of obtaining facts to establish the laws governing the phenomena of animal magnetism, and have been continued in this particular case, for the elucidation of the disease developed by its influence.

Catalepsy does not extend its morbid influence to that portion of the brain that provides nervous excitement to the system of organic life; if it did, the functions of respiration and circulation would cease during the paroxysm, and life be extinguished. Neither does its power obliterate for the time, the action of the intellectual organs; for how could these be manifested when all its symptoms are upon the patient in their most perfect state? The

power of articulation, shows that the organs through whose agency the mental operations are conveyed by the faculty of speech, are still supplied with nervous influence, and are under the control of the will, consequently not influenced by the disease; and the *source* of that nervous power which is bestowed on the muscles during locomotion, and which is subject to the will, is also independent of its morbid action.

The exciting cause of cataleptic symptoms may arise from mental or physical—local or general irritations. Catalepsy is only the *symptom* of a disease. The *cause* of the repeated attacks of this affection, undermines the health, and ultimately destroys life. The disease, being a secondary symptom of an irritation which is acting with continued injury to the system, only showing itself when it becomes of sufficient intensity to develop this peculiar condition, is uninterruptedly bearing upon the health of the patient. In the case under consideration, it has been repeatedly induced without the least injury. The reason is obvious;—the exciting cause being entirely removed, the system is left in as perfect state of health as before the experiment.

The proximate cause of the pathognomonic muscular phenomena, arises in an equal distribution of nervous power conferred on the voluntary muscles of animal life. The nervous influence necessary to the rectitude of these organs, is regularly transmitted; but as there is a disconnection of the intellectual faculties and physical condition, volition is not directed to them, consequently do not perform those offices for which they were intended; they are equivoiced by this nervous stimulus. When external force is applied, as in bending the arm, the balance of power is merely overcome, and upon withdrawing the force, the power is again equally balanced; presenting in the limb the diagnostic symptom of the disease. When the will acts upon these muscles in their normal condition, it changes or overcomes this equal distribution of the nervous influence, and they perform those movements directed by the intellect. During sleep, the voluntary muscular system is in the relaxed state to which it was resigned when sleep was taking possession of the system; but the phenomenon in question is unpremeditated, and seizes suddenly upon those organs subject to its influence; leaving all other parts in the accomplishment of their natural functions.

The pathology consists in the entire separation of the intellectual faculties from the requirements of physical existence. The functions of the external senses by which we are connected with surrounding objects, and through whose agency the mind recognises external relations, are by the action of the disease closed to all impressions. The intellectual power of volition, which excites the muscles to act in obedience to the dictates of the mind, is stationary; because the mind is disconnected with the external world. This condition annuls the power of making muscular efforts, because it has annulled the desire of willing;—for as the mind perceives not the situation

of the body, it does not comprehend its wants, and therefore cannot will the action of the organs of external life.

Catalepsy is confined to the *voluntary motor* and *sensitive* divisions of the nervous system. The intellectual operations are indirectly influenced by the *closing* of the channels of sensation.

If the mind is not dormant when the body is under the influence of this disease, why does it not manifest itself through the vocal organs, as when replying to the interrogations of the magnetiser? Simply, because the disease has shut it in from the perception of external influences; and however perfect it may be in itself, the external world can have no bearing upon it; its desire of external communication through the organs of speech is not excited.

In may be asked, through what channel the magnetiser communicates his ideas to the magnetised, if the functions of the external senses are in abeyance? The reply would be speculative; but that they are not transmitted in the usual modes is shown from the fact, that should another than the magnetiser propound the question, the sound would fall on the ear without producing an impression; and the accurate perception in the sensorium of the quality of many substances, when placed in the hand, that during a natural state, could only be determined by the eye, is offered to the inference that the communication is made through the ordinary means.

Animal magnetism produces, in some constitutions, merely a condition of sound sleep; while in others it superadds convulsions; in this case, it was the *exciting* cause of catalepsy: and in every instance, its morbid force is exerted on some portion of the nervous system. Irritation in the alimentary canal will sometimes produce cataleptic symptoms;—so also will the more direct nervous irritation of animal magnetism; but although this peculiar phenomenon may depend upon either of these causes, it is no less genuine in its character, and no less a proper subject of pathologic investigation.

[The preceding article appears to us to be an exceedingly interesting contribution to the history of catalepsy, and we therefore have given it insertion; but in doing so we must not be supposed to endorse all the views therein set forth. On the subject of animal magnetism we formerly fully expressed our opinions, (see this Journal for Nov. 1837, p. 268,) and we have not since seen any reason to change them. As to the assumption that questions propounded to the magnetised by others than the magnetiser or those placed in relation to the former by the latter, will not be heard, we have had, what we conceive to be, ample evidence that it is wholly gratuitous.]      EDITOR.